

DEDICATION OF THE FOX TORAH

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2014

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, the dedication of a Torah is always an extremely important occasion in the Jewish community. But next week's dedication of the Fox Torah at Ezra Habonim, the Niles Township Jewish Congregation in Skokie, is truly something special.

The Fox Torah was underwritten by Martin Fox, who found some comfort from the terrors he experienced during the Holocaust in knowing that he could make such an enormous contribution to his faith and to his synagogue.

Martin Fox was 34 years old when the Nazis marched into Poland in 1939. He watched as his wife and three daughters were murdered. Then he was herded onto a train and sent to Auschwitz. He survived, came to Chicago, settled in Chicago's West Rogers Park Community, and became a successful businessman. But while he remarried, he never again had children, and the horrors of what he experienced during the Holocaust never left him.

Martin Fox joined Ezra Habonim but was emotionally unable to say the Kaddish, the prayer for the dead. After many conversations with Rabbi Shlomo Levin, then the congregation's rabbi, Mr. Fox was finally able to say Kaddish for his lost family and light the Memorial Candle at the synagogue's Kristal Nacht service.

The spiritual and personal support that Mr. Fox received from Ezra Habonim, Skokie's oldest synagogue, made a powerful difference in his life. It provided him with a safe and nurturing place, and gave him the emotional strength to recite the Kaddish in remembrance of his lost family. He in turn helped others by becoming a "gabbai" or "trustee" of the synagogue.

Today, Ezra Habonim continues its commitment to creating a warm, caring and supportive community under the leadership of Rabbi Jeffrey Weill. In addition to maintaining the tradition of giving each individual and family the personalized attention they need, the synagogue provides for the educational, religious and social needs of the Jewish community. And, as it did with Martin Fox, it gives members of the congregation the opportunity not just to take part but to give back.

While Martin Fox died in 1981, the Torah that he funded and that will be dedicated on June 1 is a true gift. As Rabbi Weill says, "This Torah symbolizes not only Martin Fox's story, but the remarkable story of the Jewish People. It represents continuity, bravery, fortitude, and the indomitable human spirit."

I want to join the Jewish community in Skokie in celebrating the completion and dedication of the Fox Torah and in thanking Ezra Habonim for the important role it plays in our community.

RECOGNIZING SOUVENISE JEANNE BAZILE

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2014

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Souvenise Jeanne Bazile, who passed away on May 11, 2014.

Mrs. Bazile, who lived in Spring Valley, New York, was 107 at the time of her passing. Originally from Haiti, she moved to the United States in 1978 to join her husband. Mrs. Bazile was a loving mother who dedicated herself to her six children, fifteen grandchildren, and fourteen great-grandchildren.

Just a few months ago, Mrs. Bazile fulfilled one of her dreams—becoming an American citizen. After living here for three decades, working hard and contributing to society, Mrs. Bazile became one of the oldest immigrants ever to gain citizenship. She is truly an inspiration for all those who hope to one day achieve the American dream.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize my constituent, Mrs. Souvenise Jeanne Bazile. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring her tremendous life.

TRIBUTE TO GUIDE DOGS OF THE DESERT

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an organization whose dedication and contributions to the Southern California community are exceptional. For the past 40 years, Guide Dogs of the Desert have tirelessly committed themselves to the service of the legally blind community. We have all heard the age-old adage, "a dog is a man's best friend," but a guide dog is so much more than a best friend. Guide dogs are essential to the legally blind in ways that are simple, such as crossing the street to go grocery shopping, and ways that can be more complex, like airplane travel. These dogs dedicate their lives so that the blind may see, and in light of all they have done for the community, I would like to recognize these faithful and dutiful animals as well as their equally devoted trainers and volunteers at Guide Dogs of the Desert.

Founded in 1972, Guide Dogs of the Desert was built on the premise that every legally blind person should have the opportunity to adopt a guide dog, regardless of the depths of their hardship. This dream could only be made into a reality because of the amazing volunteers that give their time and effort to this organization's mission. These volunteers selflessly provide love, food, shelter, discipline and socialization to puppies that are just beginning on their journey toward guide dog graduation. The fingerprints of these individuals are found at every juncture of this organization. Among many other responsibilities, these volunteers take in 12 week-old puppies, assist with student interaction to increase awareness in the community, and complete the basic office tasks that allow Guide Dogs of

the Desert to run smoothly. These individuals go above and beyond the call of duty to help those visually impaired come one step closer to independence and today they deserve commendation.

While many of us know the pleasure of canine companionship and loyalty from our family pet, we cannot appreciate the complexity of the relationship that develops between a visually impaired person and their guide dog. These dogs help these individuals in such a wide variety of ways, and their service enriches these lives powerfully, improving their daily quality of life. With over 1,000 dogs trained, many of these success stories may be found scattered throughout the Nation.

The organization's tireless passion for service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the visually impaired community. Although there are many schools, Guide Dogs of the Desert is one of the most exceptional. As one guide dog recipient stated, "Frankly, all of the schools do an adequate job in developing extraordinary animals, but only Guide Dogs of the Desert adapts the training according to the very special needs of the people with multiple disabilities, veterans and even difficult cases like mine." I am certain that many more individuals and families are grateful for the guide dogs, the volunteers, and the organization itself for all of their services and I salute their efforts moving forward into their fourth decade of dedicated assistance.

RECOGNIZING TERESITA BATAYOLA, RECIPIENT OF THE CHAMPION OF CHANGE AWARD

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound admiration that I rise to congratulate Teresita Batayola on being honored as a White House Champion of Change. Teresita has been an advocate for the Puget Sound region's Asian-American & Pacific Islander (AAPI) community for many years and is incredibly deserving of this award.

Since the beginning of her tenure as CEO of International Community Health Services (ICHS) in July of 2005, Teresita has worked tirelessly to ensure that the healthcare needs of the AAPI community are met. She has overseen the opening of new clinics in Bellevue and the Rainier Valley, and developed a mobile dental clinic that visits Seattle area middle and high schools. Each year ICHS serves over 19,000 patients in 50 languages, a feat that I am confident would not be possible without Teresita's commitment to understanding the needs and dynamics of the communities her organization serves.

This commitment has taken on a new and innovative form in the last year as ICHS has worked to help AAPI communities in the Seattle area access the benefits of the Affordable Care Act. Under Teresita's leadership, ICHS has enrolled over 5,800 individuals in health plans through their multi-lingual and multi-cultural in-person assister team. This effort to provide culturally appropriate healthcare assistance will have a deep impact on the health and wellbeing of these communities for years to come.